

# Welfare dumps farms

(Continued from Page A1)

Buildings—the equipment and herds aren't included, he said.

"There is a lot to be gained in keeping the herds," said Weinstock. "There is a phenomenal gene pool in those herds, with great sires and production records.

"I don't like the idea of the state dispersing these herds willy-nilly through livestock sales. It's too short-sighted.

"There's a lot of research going on at these farms. What's going to happen to that? I guess it will have to be terminated."

Nevertheless, Weinstock said the Grange is happy to see the Governor has transferred the institutional farms from Welfare to PDA.

"Welfare was interested only in dumping the farms, cutting their losses, and putting the money back into their department. We're glad an interested body like PDA got them. They should be more realistic in determining their use."

He added the Governor's order stated that the state doesn't need the farms to provide the food product

supplies for the institutions. Weinstock pointed out that the food costs would have to be subsidized from the general fund as a result. "It's like borrowing from Peter to pay Paul," he said.

According to Reno Thomas, chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, these farms produce \$3.3 million worth of food a year that goes back into the institutions. He added that the people who were employed to work the farms also took care of the hospital grounds.

Weinstock said the Grange was hoping to have House Bill 1535 passed rather than the Governor's order. But this bill, which would set up a lands management commission to oversee the institutional farms operations and the disposition of the leased agricultural lands, is still tied up in the House Agriculture Committee.

Since the Governor has given PDA a June 30, 1981 deadline, there might be enough time to get House Bill 1535 passed, he said.

What will happen to the

farms this year? Earlier in March PDA Secretary Penrose Hallowell stated he hoped to have the farms in operation over the summer. A PDA spokesman now said the department hopes to have the leasing mechanisms ready by February 1981, so this year's growing season can be written off.

The PDA spokesman added that PDA was in a study period to see what they want to do with the farms.

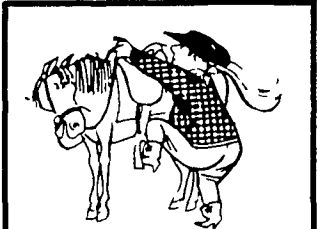
As far as the sale of livestock was concerned the PDA spokesman pointed out the Governor's order calls for PDA to notify Welfare 60 days before discontinuing the supply of milk, beef, or pork that the institutions get from the farms so PDA cannot sell any livestock for at least two months.

There are seven farms set up for dairy operations. They include Allentown, Danville, Mayview, Norristown, Woodville, Polk, and Selinsgrove. Two of the hospitals are set up for beef. They are Somerset and Wernersville, with Laurelton being a beef and swine operation.

The PDA spokesman pointed out there have been no livestock sales scheduled at the present time.

The future of the ten farms with an estimated 1400 grade and registered Holsteins and 5000 hogs, along with over 5000 acres of cropland and pastureland rests in the hands of PDA.

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McDonnell Dairy Store East Greenville Montgomery County John L. & Francis J. McDonnell showing Larry A. Rush (center), Manager Boyertown Office their milk jugging operation The McDonnell Dairy Farm has 140 Holstein milking cows



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